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Quick Links

Penthouse Party



The GPTF threw a meet and greet party atop 66 Main Street last week to get Yonkers green groups

together "on" one roof.

More than 40 Yonkers environmentalists came out to share ideas and talk agendas, including folks from Groundwork Hudson Valley, Hudson River Audubon Society, Yonkers Land Conservancy, Yonkers Science Barge, Old Croton Aqueduct, Hudson River Community Association, and others.

Remaining Yonkers Green Month Events



Looking for things to do on Spring Break or for Earth Month? Look no more.

The GPTF presents the city's list of Earth Month events to be enjoyed by all ages, from environmental film/wine nights to vinecuttings. There are almost 30 city-wide events to be enjoyed by the whole family. Here's what's left in the month of April.

Saturday, April 17

9-10 am

Free organic soil, composts, and mulching class at Stew Leonard's in Yonkers, 914-375-4700.

NOTE NEW TIME AND PLACE**Saturday, April 17****Noon-1 pm**

Join Yonkers' Groundwork Hudson Valley Director of River Programs, Ann-Marie Mitroff, at the Irvington Public Library for her information-packed lecture on rain gardening as part of a day-long series of environmental talks. Main Street School, 101 Main St., Irvington, NY 914-375-2151.

Saturday, April 17 - CANCELLED**3 pm**

Race/Fun Run to Save Whales Bring your family and friends to support the ongoing protection of whales and dolphins at this 1K fun run for kids (or adults) or 5 K race, starting at Beczak Center and routing along the waterfront and Yonkers historic district. \$5 donation goes to Earth Island Institute and www.savejapandolphins.org. Prizes and medals! Vendors welcome! Entrants can pre-register on line at www.ny4whales.org or call 914-793-9186. In person registration starts at 2 pm. Beczak Environmental Education Center, 35 Alexander St., Yonkers.

Tuesday, April 20**6-9 pm**

Attention students and school personnel: Learn about sustainable developments in green business and industry at a sustainability expo hosted by the Children's Environmental Literacy Fund (CELf) in partnership with the Green Schools Coalition of Westchester at PACE University. Information booths, including those of Yonkers' Groundwork Hudson Valley and Yonkers Science Barge will promote inspiring, positive, real-world solutions to global environmental issues. For more information, call 914- 375-2151.

Earth Day: Thursday, April 22**7:30 am sharp**

Native American tribal chief and other spiritual leaders gather for the annual Blessing of the Hudson River at Beczak Center's beach. 35 Alexander Street, Yonkers. Call 914-377-1900 ext. 13.

Earth Day: Thursday, April 22**10am-4pm**

Riverside High School Earth Day Celebration at Yonkers Riverside High School. Join students, faculty and the Yonkers Green Policy Task Force celebrate Earth Month with environmental PSA's, commercials and podcasts; biology and earth science students planting flowers outside; Synergy Lab students displaying their recycled paper; Auto Cad students projecting their solar paneled building designs; Groundwork Hudson Valley doing vine cutting on Kennedy Blvd. with Riverside students; and more. 565 Warburton Ave., Yonkers. 914-376-8425.

Earth Day: Thursday, April 22**12:30-12:45 pm**

Watch Groundwork Hudson Valley's Science Barge Director Bob Walters adjust the barge's solar panels to face solar south for maximum energy efficiency in celebration of spring and Earth Day. Exact timing depends on sunrise and sunset so come aboard at 12:30 to prevent missing the stopwatch countdown. Refreshments provided. Yonkers Pier. Call 914-375- 2151 or e-mail bob@groundworkhudsonvalley.org

Friday, April 23**7 -10 pm**

Greenies Awards. Join us for stroll down the "green" carpet as the Yonkers Green Policy Task Force honors everyday Yonkers citizens who have gone "green" in their daily lives. Fantastic, fun event with hundreds in attendance. Cash bar. Hors D'oeuvres. [Park Hill Racquet Club](#), 2

Glenbrook Ave., Yonkers. 914- 377-6064.

Saturday, April 24
7:30 am sharp

Native American tribal chief and other spiritual leaders gather for the annual Blessing of the Hudson River at Beczak's beach. 35 Alexander Street, Yonkers. Call (914) 377-1900 ext. 13.

Saturday, April 24
9-10 am

Free pruning class at Stew Leonard's in Yonkers, call 914-375-4700.

Saturday, April 24
9-11 am

Meet at Tibbetts Park in front of the swimming pool bathhouse for a spring migration bird walk with Hudson River Audubon Society President Michael Bochnik. BYOB (Bring your own binoculars.) Wear comfortable shoes. Rain or shine. Ages six to 99. Call 914-237-9331 for directions.

10 am-Noon

Don't let invasive vines kill our trees. Meet the Yonkers Land Conservancy at Rumsey Rd. and Cross County Pkwy. to clip invasive vines with provided shears. Email mommylolooh@hotmail.com

Saturday, April 24
10 am-2 pm

Earth Day at Beczak Center. Join staff and friends in giving back to the earth by caring for Beczak's marsh, beach, and lawn. Snacks and gloves provided. Live music by local bluegrass band "Greetings from Anywhere" at 11 am. 35 Alexander St., Yonkers. 914- 377-1900 ext. 13.

Saturday, April 24
12-5 pm

How to Grow the Best Tomato. Come learn what makes tomatoes grow and flourish aboard Groundwork Hudson Valley's Science Barge in Yonkers. Free Brandywine Heirloom tomato plants while supplies last. Also learn how solar, wind, and bioenergies can be integrated together to produce food. Yonkers downtown waterfront. 914-375-2151.

Saturday, April 24
2 pm

I Do, I Do, I do Believe in Fairies. Let nature be your guide. Join the naturalist for an amazing afternoon of fairy houses. This fun-filled program will help children explore their imagination and creativity while building their own unique fairy homes. Lenoir Preserve, Dudley Street, Yonkers. 914-968-5851.

Sunday, April 25
11 am-1 pm

Join the Yonkers Bike Club, Westchester County Board of Legislators Chairman Ken Jenkins and Yonkers City Council President Chuck Lesnick in cleaning parts of the South County Trailway Bike Path at Tuckahoe Road in preparation for spring walking and biking. Gloves and garbage bags supplied. Then ride the bike path ride to Elmsford. Meet in parking lot at 75 Tuckahoe Rd. in between I-87 and the Saw Mill Pkwy. Email yonkersbikeclub@gmail.com

Sunday, April 25
12-5 pm

Rocket Launches, Telescopic Sky Observations, Star Shows, and Astronomy Activity Labs at Yonkers' Hudson River Museum. 511 Warburton Ave., Yonkers. 914-963-4550.

Sunday, April 25

4:15 Concert under the direction of Taffy Williams, music director

5:00 Mass to Save the Earth. Annunciation Church, 470 Westchester Ave., Yonkers. 914-779-7345.

Wednesday, April 28

6:45 pm

Come to the penthouse at 66 Main Street to enjoy wine and snacks in this mega-hip, geothermally- heated luxury loft apartment building in Downtown Yonkers for a private screening of the Academy Award nominee for Best Documentary Feature, Food, Inc., an expose on America's industrialized food system. 914- 377-6067.

Friday, April 30

6:45-8:45 pm

Don't miss this acclaimed Oscar winning docuthriller, The Cove, where Flipper meets the Bourne Identity. Winner of Best Documentary in 2009. Come to Sarah Lawrence College's Heimbold Visual Arts Center, 1 Mead Way, Bronxville. Join Yonkers whale and dolphin advocate Taffy Williams for a wine and cheese Q&A and to learn how you can help protect our underwater world. 914-377-6067.

*** Arbor Day Tree Plantings will be going on throughout the city all month***

Plants for Sale



Come to the 2010 Armour Villa Native garden plant and garden art sale and opening celebration from 11 am-2 pm on Sat., May 1 (Rain date: May 2) at Bronxville & Vera Roads in Yonkers to buy:

- Eco-friendly, beautiful native plants and seeds
- Biodegradable planting pots
- Great gifts for Mother's Day
- Bring your whole family

Free hands-on activities for the kids
Free refreshments for all!

Master Gardener Volunteers and other expert gardeners will be available to answer your gardening questions. Free literature on native plants, plus those bad invasive ones, too.

Sustainable Breakfast Series

Hear ye all civic-minded environmentalists.

Set aside Thursday, April 22 for panel discussions on eco-friendly business practices with Reckson Associates and the law firm of Zarin & Steinmetz from 7:30-9:00



a.m.

WHERE: 360 Hamilton Ave., White Plains, 914-682- 7800.

Yonkers Leads Green Legislation



Yonkers recently passed a moratorium on Con Edison's practice of clear cutting literally thousands of trees along transmission lines throughout Westchester County and in Yonkers by calling on the Public Service commission to impose a temporary stop order.

The energy company states the practice could reduce power outages from fallen trees whereas many residents are outraged by the plan, saying it is literally overkill.

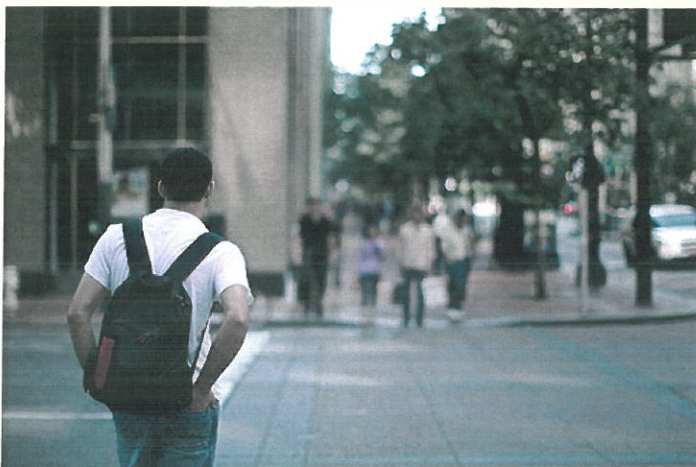
The resolution, which has also been adapted by Greenburgh, Yorktown and Westchester County

(on their county property) was originally developed by LORAX, a citizens' group working on the cause and in getting Con Ed to re-open its vegetation management guidelines from 2005 to allow for public review and feedback. In other words, the plan is to have Con Edison replant the vegetation that was destroyed in Westchester, as well as across the state.

Such a policy update would also consider aesthetic impacts, property value impacts and other concerns affecting local communities while providing a reasonable effort at mitigation (for example, DEC-compliant erosion control, view shed buffer re-planting, and more.)

For more information, please click [here](#) and here for LORAX and [here](#) for Con Ed.

Popping the Question: Real Man on the Street Interview



Dear Faithful Readers:

We've heard this is your favorite GPTF column and for that, today, we will offer you yet another compelling "Man on the Street" environmental interview live from the Square.

And the questions is...

"What could Yonkers do to protect its environment? "

"They could start by getting rid of all the big SUV's the city gives to its employees and at least trade

them in for Pruis' with accelerator problems," said one man, laughing at his own quick humor!

"How about they put recycling cans in the pedestrian shopping areas so people have a place to recycle their garbage? Also give tickets to people who litter!" offered Mallory Reinhardt of Tarrytown. "I ride this bus everyday and a lot of these people like to see this hub really nice and clean."

The GPTF agrees and has held meetings with the Downtown BID and the City's DPW to work on just that.

"People need to pick up after their dogs," complained a local apartment building dweller who was walking his dog with a tell-tale plastic bag in hand. As if on cue, he began doing an imitation of comedian George Carlin. "See that guy there? He's out here everyday with no baggie. And I ain't doin' it for him, ya know what I mean? No way! I'd rather kick him in the (blank) instead! You want my name? I'll tell him my name. My name is I am going to kick your (fill in the blank) if you don't pick up after your dog. That's my name!"

The GPTF has discussed a number of dogged solutions to this problem. One is composting the waste. Another was to ask building owners to offer bags and waste receptacles at building entrances. We will keep you posted.

"How 'bout Yonkers collects used vegetable oil to put in its city cars?" said Chris M. Jones, a student at Mercy College. "I heard White Plains is doing this. It's pretty cool. Look. There's a guy eating fried food now!"

Indeed he was right. And man did those french fries look good. Just as we were about to call it a day to go get our own fries, hold the calories, along came JJ. You all know JJ. He's becoming a regular in this column.

"Hey. What are you asking today?" said JJ. "I want to be in the news!"

Upon hearing the question, JJ shrugged his shoulders and dramatically lifted his hands into the air.

"You see what I mean?" he pleaded. "Maybe if you guys figure that one out, you could get me a job!"

We hear you, JJ! We hear you!

Until next time...

School Recycling Presentation

This month, two Yonkers public schools called upon the GPTF and Westchester County to give recycling presentations to their student bodies.

A big thank you goes to John Scaramuzzo of Westchester County's Department of Environmental Facilities for bringing his show on



the road to PEARLS and Montessori 31.

If you or your school would like to learn more about these recycling presentations or to book one for *your* school, please email Laura.Fahrenthold@yonkersny.gov.

You may also request a copy of our Daily Green Tips which students read over the school PA system.

Here's a sample tip:

* Make school lunches in reusable containers. Disposable lunch packaging creates about 67 pounds of garbage per child per year. In Yonkers, that means close to 2 million pounds of garbage per year.

Money in Your Pocket

When was the last time you heard that New York State had a surplus of money?

You're reading it here! The state is holding onto \$7 million in leftover rebate money out of \$16.9 million allocated for the Great Appliance Swap Out.

Under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority began giving rebates for the purchase of energy-efficient washers, driers and refrigerators on February 12. Funds were expected and scheduled to be available to residents for up to nine days but it has since been extended to last indefinitely, until the money is used up.



Exactly \$300 million went up for grabs across the country with Minnesota and Kansas using their portions in a matter of hours, and Iowa in a matter of days.

For more information, click [here](#). Rebate amounts range from \$50 to \$800, depending upon the product being purchased.

The Greenies Are Coming



Come watch your fellow environmentally-oriented friends, neighbors and co-workers walk the green carpet at the GPTF's second annual Greenies Awards from 7- 10 p.m. on Friday, April 23 at the [Park Hill Tennis and Racquet Club](#).

The Oscar ceremony spin-

off recognizes local citizens who have made efforts within their personal and professional lives to preserve the environment.

Last year was a terrific success as hundreds gathered in anticipation of who would be crowned Mr. and Mrs. Green Yonkers as well as who would win awards for their everyday contributions to preserving the environment.

Everyone is encouraged to attend this fun evening out with cash bar and light hors d'oeuvres.

Questions? Email Laura.Fahrenthold@yonkersny.gov or call 914-377-6067.

Directions:

Saw Mill Parkway South: Exit 4A, Rumsey Road. *Continue on Rumsey approximately 1 mile to Park Hill Avenue. Right turn onto Park Hill Avenue. Proceed 4 blocks to Van Cortlandt Park Avenue. Right turn onto Van Cortlandt Park Ave and two blocks up the hill. Club driveway at stone pillars on the left. Cross County Parkway West: Exit 1, Rumsey Road. Follow above from *. Saw Mill Parkway North: Exit at Palmer Road. Make a left on Palmer Road and another left to return south on the parkway. Exit 4A Rumsey Road. Follow above from*.

Photo Cap: Winners from last year's event

From Russia, With Vegetables!

The GPTF now has friends as far away as Russia who proudly show off their rooftop fruit and vegetable garden, reminding us that it is time to get planting!

PLEASE remember to protect genetic diversity and prevent species extinction in fruits, vegetables and grains by buying only **heirloom seeds**.

Heirloom seeds are like animals facing extinction such as Lowland Gorillas, Madagascar Fish Eagles and Black Rhinos, only they are Speckled Lettuce, Algonquin Squash and Yellow- Meated Watermelon to name just a few.

Unless the 100 million backyard gardeners and organic farmers keep these seeds alive, they will disappear from the planet. This is truly an instance where one person--a lone gardener in a backyard vegetable patch --can potentially make all the difference in the world.

With heirloom seeds there are 10,000 varieties of apples, compared to the very few F1 hybrid apple types that the multinational seed companies peddle to keep themselves in the mega seed distribution business.

Let's not forget that the Irish potato famine, which led to the death or displacement of almost 3 million people in the 1840s, is an example of what can happen when farmers rely on only a few plant species as crop cornerstones.

One store we know of that sells heirloom seeds is Sprainbrook Nursery in Scarsdale. If you know of more, please [send them to us](#) for inclusion in the next eblast.



CFL bulb at dump

Buy them. Use them.



Don't put them in the trash.



Fluorescent lamps contain mercury. It is illegal to put them in the trash.

For disposal options, go to www.GreenGuardian.com or call 877-630-0668.

Here's a trick question. When a regular lightbulb blows out, how do you dispose of it?

A. You simply throw it in the trash.

When a **CFL** or Compact Fluorescent Lamp burns out, you just throw it in the trash too, right?

A. Wrong!

CFLs contain about 5 milligrams of a neurotoxin called mercury. Each leaching bulb, according to Stanford University, can contaminate up to 6,000 gallons of water beyond safe drinking levels.

If that's not enough, an EPA funded study found that one gram of mercury deposited in a 20 acre lake is enough to contaminate the fish and make them unfit to eat.

The recycling industry estimates that in 2007 about 400 million CFLs were purchased in the USA but only 2% were recycled. That's 320 million CFLs in the trash.

Yonkers is doing its best to contain that number. If you have CFLs for disposal, the GPTF suggests wrapping them in a soft cloth and keeping them in your car until you make a point or happen to drive by the Yonkers Recycling Center, 735 Saw Mill River Road (Between Odell Ave. & Tuckahoe Rd.) where they have the proper disposal procedures.

Hours of operation:

Monday -Saturday from 7:30 a.m. -4:15 p.m. except holidays.

The Latest Buzz



Got bees?

It's now ok to come out of the proverbial closet to shout to the world from your fire escape, "I am a New York City beekeeper and proud of it!" thanks to the board of health's vote to legalize beekeeping in the city.

Agriculture depends greatly on the honeybee for 80 percent of plant pollination. Without bees, who are continuously threatened by mites, disease and urbanization, we would see a significant decrease in the

yield of fruits and vegetables-- thus greatly affecting our food supply.

With this legislation comes a message. If a city as large and cosmopolitan as New York is now allowing residents to keep bees, *could Yonkers be next?* And what about backyard chickens? If it's good enough for New York City (once again!), Peekskill and the City of Rye to name just a few, *what about Yonkers?*

In the meantime, click [here](#) to read the New York Times article.

Clean Fun



Come on out with your gloves up to Groundwork Hudson Valley's annual Saw Mill River Clean-Up.

Start Time: Saturday, May 15 at 10:30 am

End Time: Saturday, May 15 at 1:30 pm

Be part of the group of volunteers (families, civic and youth groups, businesses) to join or lead cleanup crews in bagging tons of trash from streets, parks and streams while connecting with neighbors and the great outdoors.

Check out the [online map of potential cleanup sites](#) showing various locations throughout the watershed. Then all you have to do is [register](#)!

The Kick-Off Event is at 4 pm on Wed., May 12 at the Science Barge in downtown Yonkers. Come on down to get your supplies and meet other volunteers.

For all information, call Emily at SMRC, 914-375-2151.

Idling is Not Just for Winter Anymore



With summer gas prices promising to rise and with global warming already here, drivers need to consider that temperature control idling not only gets zero miles to the gallon, but it also accounts for approximately 30% of our greenhouse gas emissions, according to the EPA.

Still:

On a typical 95F day, the car's temperature can exceed 120F in just 20 minutes! And it can jump to 149F in just 40 minutes. Also, dashboards can heat up to more

than 181F to the touch in no time.

The GPTF suggests the following solutions. Leaving windows open a bit when parking your car. But more importantly, buying sun shields for your windows to keep the heat out.

This eblast is provided by the [City of Yonkers Green Policy Task Force](#). Its members research and submit potential "green" legislative initiatives to the City Council; work on potential quality-of-life improvements for the Yonkers community; apply for environmental grants; and foster educational outreach for Yonkers students as well as the community-at-large. Their public meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th floor of City Hall.

If you know of others in the environmental community who would like to receive this news or attend meetings, please email laura.fahrenthold@yonkersny.gov

From: Council President Chuck Lesnick with Chairman Bob Walters and Coordinator Laura Fahrenthold-Pittman; District 1 Majority Leader Patricia McDow with Margaret Setterholm; District 2 Councilmember Wilson Terrero with Nortrud Spero; District 3 Councilmember Joan Gronowski with Bert Rothing; District 4 Councilmember Dennis Shepherd with Terry Joshi; District 5 Minority Leader John Murtagh with Molly Roffman; District 6 Councilmember John Larkin with Mel Goldstein; Administration's Appointee Joe D'Lando.



Written by Laura Fahrenthold-Pittman

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